

WHEREAS, the American Red Cross was founded in 1881 by Clara Barton, a woman selflessly devoted to the needs of humanity; and

WHEREAS, compassion, courage, character, and civic duty are inherent in the Red Cross mission to prevent and relieve human suffering, and the City of Alexandria shares these grand ideals; and

WHEREAS, the Red Cross is chartered and authorized by the Congress of the United States to act in times of need, providing compassionate assistance to people afflicted by personal, local or national disasters; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Chapter last year responded promptly and assisted the victims of 17 single-family fires and the victims of 11 units in the Fox Chase Apartment fire in April 2002, and has provided shelters for the victims of condominiums without heat, as well as assistance to elderly victims of crime in our city; and

WHEREAS, the Red Cross volunteers and paid staff from Alexandria responded to disasters outside of Alexandria last year as well, including the Amtrak derailment in Kensington and devastating floods in Southwest Virginia and in Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Red Cross is an active participant in disaster preparedness in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area; and

WHEREAS, people have counted on the Red Cross for the information and skills they need to be safe at home, at work, at school and at play. Last year, the Alexandria Chapter trained nearly 6500 people in lifesaving CPR and first aid and in the use of an automated external defibrillator, 700 in HIV/AIDS prevention, 1300 in lifeguarding and water safety, and 101 in the art of baby-sitting; and

WHEREAS, the American Red Cross provides lifesaving blood and blood products whenever and wherever needed - always with the safety of the blood supply as its number one priority; and

WHEREAS, the Red Cross volunteers in Alexandria have delivered International Red Cross messages from family members in war-torn areas of the world to 40 residents of Alexandria this past year; and

WHEREAS, the Red Cross staff deploy with the U.S. military to provide emergency communications and a caring presence to servicemen and women separated from their families, and the volunteers of the Alexandria Chapter have assisted 177 families in Alexandria with messages to loved ones in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Chapter of the American Red Cross has programs, including leadership development, self-esteem building and service learning for the youth of Alexandria, including intergenerational programming, serving over 2000 Alexandria youth in the past year; and

WHEREAS, the 75 volunteers of the Community Service Department of the Alexandria Red Cross, 19 of whom speak a language in addition to English, have provided 7800 hours of service to isolated, immigrant and indigent elderly in the Alexandria community; and

WHEREAS, Will Rogers once said, "We are so used to the things the Red Cross does for us, that sometimes we just plain forget to praise them."; and

WHEREAS, in 1943, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt called upon the American people with this request: "... that during this month our people rededicate themselves to the splendid aims and activities of the Red Cross.";

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KERRY J. DONLEY, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim March 2003, as:

"AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH"

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 25th day of February 2003.

KERRY J. DONLEY MAYOR
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk